

St. Stephen's News

St. Stephen's Traditional Episcopal Church, Timonium, Maryland

Vol. XX, Number 18

Edited by Anne Hawkins

May 12th, 2009

REPORT TO THE ANNUAL MEETING: PART I

The State of the Parish 2008-2009

THE PAST year has not been an easy one for St. Stephen's Church. While the parish enjoyed another year of growth -- with membership and attendance continuing steadily upwards -- we were also hit hard by the deep recession afflicting the entire American economy.

Offertory for the year was down by almost 13 percent. While this was by no means as sharp a decline as that reported by so many churches -- some have seen giving plunge by more than 30 percent -- it nonetheless presented us with a major headache.

Fiscally, we have always run a very tight ship. We don't have much choice. As a relatively young parish, we do not have the luxury of a substantial endowment. Indeed, our "rainy day" fund -- comprised of a very modest stock portfolio and a cash reserve account -- totals just under \$62,000. This might sound comfortable enough, but it amounts to less than three months operating expenses.

To make matters worse, the recession bit with even greater severity during the opening months of the year and, as a consequence, finances grew even tighter.

We responded by cutting operating expenses as deeply as we dared. **Jim Halbert**, for instance, renegotiated our utilities contract, yielding substantial savings on our electrical bill. The clergy and our director of pastoral care, meanwhile, gave up their automobile allowances for ministry-related travel -- a considerable sacrifice -- and we postponed all but essential maintenance projects.

Last but very far from least, **Allan Gushue**, our hard-working fund raiser in chief, appealed to you, the parishioners, for help. And it is most gratifying to report that you responded with characteristic generosity.

We are not completely out of the woods yet, but financially speaking, we are a lot healthier than we were at the beginning of the year. Summer, however, is almost upon us and this is one of the most nerve-wracking times of the year for church treasurers.

Family vacations tend to play havoc with cash flow. If you are planning a **trip**, **Mrs. Donna Szper**, our long-suffering treasurer, would much appreciate it if you paid pledge before you went rather than on your return.

Mrs. Szper reports that, prices continue to rise which means operating costs are continuing to spiral upwards. If you haven't yet increased your pledge, she begs you prayerfully to consider doing so.

Surprisingly, perhaps, in view of effects of the recession on church income, we have not been forced to cut back on our ministry, either to our parishioners or to the many non-parishioners we serve in the wider Baltimore community.

This is thanks in large part to our dedicated cadre of volunteer clergy -- **The Rev. Rhae Kelley**, **The Rev. Robert Menas** and **The Rev. Jon Filkins**. Their generous gifts of time have enabled us to continue to serve an increasing number of the areas civic organizations and health care institutions.

We provide chaplains for organizations including the U.S. Navy League, the Kiwanis, the English Speaking Union and the St. George's Society. We also provide pastoral care and support at Union Memorial Hospital and the Greater Baltimore Medical Center.

The clergy conduct regular church services at retirement communities and nursing homes, including **Glen Meadows**, **the Maples**, **Genesis at Brightwood**, **Lorien at Mays Chapel**, **Lorien in Columbia** and **Roland Park Place**, as well as occasional services at **Edenwald**, **Blakehurst** and **Keswick**.

The parish continues its monthly collections of non-perishable foodstuffs and household goods for **At Jacob's Well**, a charity that helps Baltimore's mentally ill homeless population. Last year we increased the number of worship services we conduct at the chapel we furnished at its East 25th Street Baltimore headquarters.

We also continue to provide chaplains, pastoral care associates and volunteers at **The Joseph Richey Hospice**, which since 1990 has been the particular focus of our community service efforts.

The hospice hopes this year to start the construction of its new hospice for children. Named **Dr. Bob's Place** after the late Dr. Robert Irwin, the hospice's much loved medical director, it will provide much needed hospice services for an estimated 120 children and their families annually.

A key player in our community service team is **Mrs. Anne Hawkins**, Director of Pastoral Care, and acting Wedding Coordinator. Mrs. Hawkins -- who not only organizes pastoral care in the parish and edits the newsletter -- is remarkably successful; at organizing our community blood drives. Despite federal health directives that disqualify increasing numbers of potential donors from giving blood, the numbers of donors has steadily increased, as have the units of blood collected.

Meanwhile, within the parish, life has been as busy as ever. Sunday worship has been greatly enhanced by the work of **Adric**, our choirmaster and organist, who has, among other things, instituted the singing of Choral Mattins. Under his direction, the Choir of Men & Boys has achieved a degree of artistic accomplishment that would be the envy of many much larger parishes -- if only, that is, were envy not a cardinal sin.

In addition to a hectic schedule that includes the annual Advent Festival of Lessons at the Roman Catholic Cathedral of Mary Our Queen, the Choir has embarked upon a series of monthly services of Choral Evensong, which Adric hopes to continue through the summer months.

If you haven't yet heard the choir sing Evensong -- one of the greatest gifts of the Anglican Church to the realm of Christian spirituality -- set aside an evening on the first Sunday of a month to join us for some of the most magnificent music ever written.

Peter Threadgill, our head lay reader and resident composer, officiates at Morning Prayer Choral Mattins and Evensong. He is admirably supported by lay readers **Gordon Turner**, **Paul Douglas**, **Dan Bursi**, **J. Brice Richardson**, **Steve Filer**, and **Dr. Kirby von Kessler**, as well as postulants **John Novicki** and **Michael Belt**.

By the way, Adric is constantly on the lookout for a few good boys. If you know a lad who might enjoy a free musical education from the finest choirmaster in Baltimore, please let us know his name. We'd love to recruit him. Remember music is a gift that stays with you all your life. What's more, music scholarships are more readily available than sports scholarships.

Our Tuesday and Friday morning Bible Studies are flourishing. **Brock Johnson** had the daunting task of taking over leadership of the Friday Morning group from veteran Bible teacher **Cal Collier** and, on top of this, he plays a leading role in directing the Tuesday morning study.

The Sunday morning adult discussion group, which Brock instituted between the 9.15 AM and 11.15 AM services last year, continues to attract a cadre of enthusiastic and (we are glad to report) opinionated participants.

The newsletter comes to you thanks to the hard-working ladies of the mailroom: **Donna Szper**, **Joyce Perlberg (and Misty)**, **Ma Bopst** and **Jim Halbert**. If you change your address or you're going away for a few days. Please let them know so they can make the necessary adjustments to the mailing list. **GPH**

FROM THE VESTRY

Parish Annual Meeting on Sunday, May 17th

ANNUAL Parish Meetings are rarely well attended affairs -- unless, of course, something ghastly is going on. Praise be, nothing ghastly has been going at St. Stephen's for quite some time, so we have been expecting a less than impressive turnout for our Parish Meeting on Sunday, May 17th.

Over the years, we've tried all manner of strategies to improve

**THE SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR
ROGATION SUNDAY**
Being the Fifth Sunday After Easter, May, 17th, 2009

8.00 AM & 9:15 AM
HOLY COMMUNION
The Epistle: St. James 1:22-27
The Gospel: St. John 16:23-33
11.15 AM MORNING PRAYER
The Psalter: Psalm 65
First Lesson: Ezekiel 34: 25-30
Second Lesson: St. Luke 11:1-13

attendance at our annual meetings with little success. This year, however, Chief Lay Reader Peter Threadgill and parishioner Elsie Entwisle have suggested a doozie – feeding you!

On Sunday, May 17th we plan to invite you all to a breakfast/brunch immediately following the 9.15 AM service. For this Sunday – and this Sunday only – the 9.15 AM and 11.15 AM services will be combined and the annual meeting will take place over breakfast.

At the meeting, the clergy and vestry will report on the parish's progress, discuss plans for the future and answer parishioners questions. We shall also be electing new vestry members. This year the nominating committee is re-nominating the three vestrymen whose terms expire this year. They are Brock Johnson, John Novicki and Dr. Kirby von Kessler. Their biographies have been published in earlier newsletters.:

COLLECT FOR THE WEEK

Fourth Sunday After Easter

ALMIGHTY God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men; Grant unto thy people, that they may love the thing which thou commandest, and desire that which thou promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed, where true

joys are to be found; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *AMEN.*
Book of Common Prayer, Page 174

✠ **PARISH PRAYER LIST** ✠

OUR Prayer Chain offers prayer daily for people on the Prayer List and guests of the Joseph Richey Hospice. To add a name to the list, or to the visiting list, or to join the Prayer Chain, call the office at 410 560 6776.

RECOVERY: Rosemary, Ruth, James, Patty, Antonio, Lauren-Michelle, McKayla, Randy, Rosemarie, Debbie, David, Skippy, Jack, Grace, Bob, Fran, Doris, Carolyn, Ken, Serina, Wyatt, Bobby, Alexander, Erlene, Kathleen, Earle, Judy, Polly, Katherine, Helen; William, Betty, Cal, Wendell, Trisha, Peggy, Linda, Millie, Dorcas, Walt, Bruce, Cienna, Tracy, Tom, Leliliah, Jennifer, Miriam, Harriet, Karen, Steve, George, Eliza, Mel, John, Randy, James, Sarah, Linda, Suzanne, Marian, Edith Anne, Steven, Jeanne, Judith, Angela, Tammy; Ellen, Jim, Patricia, Bonnie, Mary Ann, Robert, Christine, Ruth, Dee, Brian, Barbara, Gillian, Eileen, Matthew, George, Bryan, Jason, Jane, Joan, Frances, Ernie, Pat, Lynn, Michael, Ray, Leslie, Brandon, May, Scott, Stephen, Robert, Danny, Billy, Betty-Ann, Mildred, D'Metrius, Rachel, Laura, Stacey, Frank, Alma, Christine, John, Henry, Naomi, Pam, John, Ben, Kevin, Gwen, Elizabeth, Gloria, Lee Emily, Elsie, Bruce, Regina, Lewis, Madolin, Eudora, Carol, Bernie, Charlene, Josephine, Margaret, Mackie, Jody, Sheila, Jo Anne, Thomas, Jeanne, Sister Catherine-Grace, Mae, Anita, Marilyn, Lawrence, Rebecca, Dorothy, Joanne, ✕Albion, Martha, Jackie, Charles, Tony, Edward, Kim, Vivian, Geraldine, Maxine, Ann Sharon & Dennis.

LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE: Donna, Melba, Debbie, Phyllis, Georgetta, Carolyn, Perry, Suzanne, Tony, Robert, Doris, Drake, The Norris family; Gillian, Beverley, Adrienn, Jhana, Marla, Matthew, Joan, Laurie, Ellen, Lynn, Mildred, Sarah Lee, Tom, Susan, Debbie, Kathy, Owen, Douglas, Amy, Jo Anne, Mary, Gregory, Isabel, Bobby, Dorothy, Harriet, Darren, Scott, Rebecca, William, Charles, Joyce, Asfa, Eleanor, Kathy, Linda, James, Barry, Ann, Evelyn, Jeanette, Elizabeth, Virginia, Mildred, Chris, Micki, Stephen, Erik, Carol, Sandra, Elsie, Rhae, John, Robert, Mary, Michael & Loyal.

ON ACTIVE SERVICE: Alex Bursi, US. Navy; Capt. Charles Bursi & Lt. Col. Harry Hughes, U.S. Air Force; Lt. Col. R. J. Lytle & PFC Charles E. Heintz, IV, U.S. Army.

✠ **St. Stephen's Traditional** ✠
Episcopal Church

11856 Mays Chapel Road, Timonium, MD 21093
Tel.: Office (410) 560-6776; Night 665-1278
Web Address: <http://www.ststephens-md.org>

RECTOR: The Ven. Guy P. Hawtin
ASSOCIATE RECTOR: The Rev. James V. Johnson, Jr.
VICARS: The Rev. Rhae E. Kelley, The Rev. Robert Menas & The Rev. Jonathan Filkins
ORGANIST & CHOIRMASTER: Adric
DIRECTOR OF PASTORAL CARE: Anne Hawkins (410-308-2771)
WEDDING CO-ORDINATOR: Anne Hawkins (410-308-2771)

SUNDAY SERVICES
8.00am -- Holy Communion
9.15am -- Holy Communion (Nursery & Church School)
11.15am -- Morning Prayer (Nursery)
(1st. Sun. of the month: Holy Communion at 11.15am)

WEEKDAY SERVICES
Wednesday: 6.00pm Evening Prayer
Friday: Noon: Healing Eucharist
Saturday: 5.00PM Family Eucharist.

**HYMNS FOR ROGATION SUNDAY,
BEING THE FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER**

May 17th, 2009

PROCESSIONAL: 101 (Kingsfold)

O Jesus, crowned with all renown

GRADUAL HYMN: 497 (Dundee)

O God of Bethel, by whose hand

SERMON : 287 (Elbing)

Give praise and glory unto God

COMMUNION HYMN: 195 (Rendez a Dieu)

Father, we thank thee who hast planted

RECESSIONAL: 311 (Royal Oak)

All things bright and beautiful

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